

### REMARKS

This paper is in response to the Office Action mailed on March 26, 2004.

Claims 11, 15, 18, 22, 25, 35 and 41 are amended, claims 1-10 and 26-34 were previously canceled, and no claims are added; as a result, claims 11-25 and 35-43 are now pending in this application.

Each of the independent claims has been amended to clarify the recitation and include that a substrate has a first planar surface having an unused reduced width buffer area, and to include a ground or polished surface without substantially any irregularities that produce weak points in the substrate.

On page 6 of the specification (and illustrated in Figures 2 and 3) it is explained that the unused buffer of silicon (substrate) has a microscopically rough surface that forms irregularities on the surface and sides of the die. These irregularities produce weak points in the silicon substrate.

In the claimed invention as amended in each of the independent claims, the unused buffer area has a reduced width (see Figure 3). Applicant can not find this in any of the cited art. Also, in the claimed invention as amended in each of the independent claims, the additional step of grinding resulting in a ground or polished surface without substantially any irregularities that produce weak points in the substrate (see first paragraph on page 7). Applicant can not find this also is not found in any of the cited prior art.

None of the cited prior art references was cited as disclosing or suggesting a substrate having a first planar surface having an unused reduced width buffer area, or a ground or polished surface without substantially any irregularities that produce weak points in the substrate. Thus the amendments to the claims distinguishes the claimed invention over any of the cited prior art taken singly or in combination.

### §112 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 11-16, 18-25, 35-38, and 41-43 were rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Applicant respectfully traverses and asserts

that the claims meet this statutory requirement. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider this rejection of the claims.

**§102 Rejection of the Claims**

Claims 11, 12, 14-16, 18, 20-25, 35, 36, 38, 41, and 43 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by Boruta (U.S. Patent No. 5,786,266) in view of secondary references Efrat et al. ("Dicing Yield- Using Blade Torque..."), Weisshaus et al. ("Online Monitoring of the Dicing Process"), and Boucher et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,718,615).

This rejection has been overcome at least by the amendment to the claims as explained above. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider this rejection of the claims.

**§103 Rejection of the Claims**

Claims 11, 12, 14-18, 20-25, 35, 36, 38, 39, 41, and 43 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boruta w/ secondary references, as applied to claims 11-25, 35-38, and 41-43 above, and further in view of Bean et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,196,378) taken with Borneman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,152,939).

This rejection has been overcome at least by the amendment to the claims as explained above. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider this rejection of the claims.

Claims 13, 19, 37, and 42 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boruta w/ secondary references, as applied to claims 11, 18, 35, and 41 above, and further in view of Natsume (U.S. Patent No. 5,477,062).

This rejection has been overcome at least by the amendment to the claims as explained above. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider this rejection of the claims.

### CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance, and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. Applicant further incorporates all prior response by reference to preserve all issues for appeal. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's attorney at (612) 349-9587 to facilitate prosecution of this application.

If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0743.

Respectfully submitted,

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By his Representatives,

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Date

*26 Aug '04*  
By *Timothy Clise*  
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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail, in an envelope addressed to: MS Amendment, Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on this 26<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2004.

Name

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Signature

*Peter Rebuffoni*